

## REPORT

*Of the Committee on Private Land Claims in the case of M. Burns.*

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JANUARY 30, 1824.

Read, and, with a bill for his relief, committed to a committee of the whole House to-morrow.

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The Committee on Private Land Claims, to which were referred the petition and documents of Malachi Burns,

### REPORT:

The petitioner states, that Edward Metcalf received from the Spanish government, on the 11th day of August, 1806, a concession for 310 arpens of land, lying in the Parish of Feliciana, in the state of Louisiana, and that the same was surveyed the year following—that, in the year 1811, he purchased the said land and settled on it, and has inhabited and cultivated the same ever since; that, in 1820, when the land office was opened at St. Helena Courthouse, he entered his claim with the Register and Receiver, and was assured it was a good one and would be approved of by Congress; and that, from some cause unknown to him, his claim has not been reported to the General Land Office—wherefore, he asks relief.

The petitioner offers, in support of his petition, the concession to Metcalf, and the deed executed by Metcalf to him in 1811. He also exhibits the affidavit of Thomas and John Dortch, made on the 30th of October last. They swear that Malachi Burns settled on the place where he now lives, in 1811, and that he has cultivated it ever since, and has from 50 to 60 acres cleared.

The committee think there would be an impropriety in sanctioning evidences of title granted by the Spanish government, long after the date of the cession of Louisiana to the United States. However, as the petitioner appears to have been a bona fide purchaser, and furnishes conclusive proof that he has constantly, since 1811, inhabited and cultivated his purchase, which is claimed by no one else, the committee recommend, that he be placed on a footing with those who inhabited and cultivated a tract of land in that district of country prior to the 15th day of April, 1813; and for that purpose report a bill.

